

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for sharing contact list information between participants of a chat session, comprising:

identifying a first chat session participant maintaining a first contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said first chat session participant and identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said second chat participant, said first chat session participant and said second chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

providing the second chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the first contact list;

selecting the first contact list;

selecting the second contact list;

comparing said first contact list and said second contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list and said second contact list;

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list;

determining whether said first contact list is modifiable by said second chat session participant and modifying said first contact list by said second chat session participant to include non-common contacts if said first contact list is modifiable by said second chat session participant, wherein modifying comprises the step of adding non-

common contact information to said first contact list, the contact information pertaining to parties other than the first and second chat session participants; and

providing the first chat session participant with access to contact information contained within said second contact list.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, further comprising the step of displaying an icon within a chat session interface used by the second chat session participant to indicate whether said first contact list is accessible to said second chat session participant.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein said displayed icon indicates whether said first contact list is modifiable.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of displaying an icon within a chat session interface used by the first chat session participant to indicate whether said second contact list is accessible to said first chat session participant.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6, wherein said displayed icon of claim 6 indicates whether said second contact list is modifiable.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

identifying a third chat session participant maintaining a third contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said third chat session participant, said third chat session participant participating within said common chat session; and

providing the third chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the first contact list and the second contact list and providing the first chat session participant and said second chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the third contact list.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

permitting the selection of said displayed icon for said first contact list and said displayed icon for said second contact list;

comparing said selected first contact list and said selected second contact list to said third contact list; and

displaying to said third chat session participant contacts that are common to said first selected contact list, said second selected contact list, and said third contact list according to results from said comparing step.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

permitting any of said first chat session participant, said second chat session participant and said third chat session participant to modify any of said first contact list, said second contact list and said third contact list according to results from said comparing step; and

permitting any of said chat session participants associated with said contact list to reject said modification.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein if said display icon indicates that said first contact list is not modifiable, further comprising the step of requesting said first chat session participant to allow said second chat session participant to modify said contact list.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein if said display icon indicates that said second contact list is not modifiable, further comprising the step of requesting said second chat session participant to allow said first chat session participant to modify said contact list.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

requesting said first chat session participant to provide access to said first contact list; and

requesting said second chat session participant to provide access to said second contact list.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing accessibility status to selected chat session participants.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing accessibility status to all active chat session participants.

16. (Previously Presented) A method for providing contact management to parties engaged in a chat communication session, the method comprising:

identifying a first chat session participant selecting a first contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said first chat session participant and identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list selected by said first chat session participant containing contact records relating to contacts of said second chat participant, said first chat session participant and said second chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

providing access for said first contact list to a second participant to the communication session;

comparing said first contact list and second contact list;

identifying similar contacts between contact records located in said first contact list and contact records located in said second contact list;

presenting similar contacts in a pre-selected visual format and dissimilar contacts in a different visual format; and

adding selected dissimilar contact records located in said first contact list to said second contact list.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said first contact list is modifiable by said second participant to the communication session; and

if said first contact list is modifiable by said second participant, adding selected dissimilar contact records to said first contact list.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein said step of providing access to said first contact list further comprises the steps of:

determining an accessibility status of said first contact list; and

providing access to said first contact list if said accessibility status indicates that said second participant can access said first contact list.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said second contact list is accessible by said first participant to the communication session; and

if said second contact list is accessible by said first participant, identifying similar contacts between contact records located in said second contact list and contact records located in said first contact list.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 19, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said second contact list is modifiable by said first participant to the communication session; and

adding selected dissimilar contact records located in said second contact list to said first contact list.

21. (Original) The method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of displaying an icon to represent whether a contact list for a participant to the communication session is accessible.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 21, further comprising the step of modifying said icon to display whether said contact list for said participant to the communication session is modifiable.

23. (Previously Presented) In a chat session having a plurality of communicating chat session participants, a contact management method comprising:

identifying a plurality of chat session participants participating within a common chat session, each chat session participant maintaining a participant specific contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said that participant;

assembling and displaying a contact list in a GUI associated with one of the chat session participants, wherein said contact list includes contact records from chat session lists maintained by chat session participants other than the one participant in which the GUI is displayed, and presenting contact records similar among the chat session lists in a pre-selected visual format and dissimilar records in a different visual format, the similarity and dissimilarity based on a comparison of the chat session lists;

selecting a first contact list;

selecting a second contact list;

comparing said first contact list and said second contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list and said second contact list;

accepting modifications to said contact list by chat session participants other than the one participant in which the GUI is displayed; and

responsively displaying results from said modifications within said GUI.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for providing contact management in a chat session, comprising:

identifying a first chat session participant maintaining a first contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said first chat session participant, identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said second chat participant, and identifying a third chat participant having a third contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said third chat participant, said first chat session participant, said second chat session participant, and said third chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

sending a token of introduction originated by the first chat session participant to the second chat session participant, said token of introduction providing a recommendation for said second chat session participant;

transferring said token of introduction to the third chat session participant who is known to said first chat session participant; [[and]]

if said third chat session participant accepts said token of introduction, modifying said third contact list with contact information for said second chat session participant;

comparing said first contact list, said second contact list, and said third contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list, said second contact list, and said third contact list; and

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list.

25. (Original) The method according to claim 24, further comprising modifying said second contact list with information for said third chat session participant.

26. (Original) The method according to claim 25, further comprising discarding said token of introduction upon expiration of a specified period of time.

27. (Original) The method according to claim 24, further comprising executing said transferring step upon said third chat session participant initiating a chat session with said second chat session participant.

28. (Previously Presented) A system for providing contact management, comprising:

a first contact list, said first contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of and maintained by a first chat session participant;

a second contact list, said second contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of and maintained by a second chat session participant, said second chat session participant engaged in a chat session with said first chat session participant; and

a computing application program facilitating said chat session, said application program permitting said second chat session participant to modify contact information contained within said first contact list and permitting said first chat session participant to modify contact information contained within said second contact list by

comparing said first contact list and said second contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list and the second contact list; and

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list.

29. (Original) The system according to claim 28, further comprising a computer application server for executing said computing application program.

30. (Original) The system according to claim 28, further comprising a first computing device for permitting said first contact list to be viewed by said second chat session participant and a second computing device permitting said second contact list to be viewed by said first chat session participant.

31. (Withdrawn) A GUI for providing contact management for chat session participants, comprising:

a chat display window for displaying a first chat session participant and a second chat session participant engaged in a chat session; and

at least one contact window for displaying contact information for at least one chat session participant engaged in said chat session.

32. (Withdrawn) The GUI according to claim 31, wherein said at least one contact window is a window pane within said chat display window.

33. (Withdrawn) The GUI according to claim 32, wherein said at least one contact window is a window pane external to said chat display window.

34. (Withdrawn) The GUI according to claim 31, further comprising a first modifiable status icon which indicates whether said first contact list is accessible and, if said first contact list is accessible, whether said first contact list is modifiable.

35. (Withdrawn) The GUI according to claim 31, further comprising a second status icon which indicates whether said second contact list is accessible and, if said second contact list is accessible, whether said second contact list is modifiable.

36. (Previously Presented) A machine readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying a first chat session participant maintaining a first contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said first chat session participant and identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said second chat participant, said first chat session participant and said second chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

providing the second chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the first contact list;

selecting the first contact list;

selecting the second contact list;

comparing said first contact list and said second contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list and said second contact list;

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list;

determining whether said first contact list is modifiable by said second chat session participant and modifying said first contact list by said second chat session participant to include non-common contacts if said first contact list is modifiable by said second chat session participant, wherein modifying comprises the step of adding non-common contact information to said first contact list, the contact information pertaining to parties other than the first and second chat session participants; and

providing the first chat session participant with access to contact information contained within said second contact list.

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage according to claim ~~[[37]]~~ 36,

further comprising the step of displaying an icon within a chat session interface used by the second chat session participant to indicate whether said first contact list is accessible to said second chat session participant.

40. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage according to claim 39, wherein said displayed icon indicates whether said first contact list is modifiable.

41. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage according to claim 40, further comprising the step of displaying an icon within a chat session interface used by the first chat session participant to indicate whether said second contact list is accessible to said first chat session participant.

42. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage according to claim 41, wherein said displayed icon of claim 6 indicates whether said second contact list is modifiable.

43. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage according to claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

identifying a third chat session participant maintaining a third contact list containing contact information relating to contacts of said third chat session participant, said third chat session participant participating within said common chat session; and providing the third chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the first contact list and the second contact list and providing the first chat session participant and said second chat session participant with access to contact information contained within the third contact list; and

displaying icons within a chat session interface used by a third chat session participant to indicate whether said first chat contact list and said second contact list is accessible to said third chat session participant.

44. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage according to claim 43, further comprising the step of:

permitting the selection of said displayed icon for said first contact list and said displayed icon for said second contact list;

comparing said selected first contact list and said selected second contact list to said third contact list; and

displaying to said third chat session participant contacts that are common to said first selected contact list, said second selected contact list, and said third contact list according to results from said comparing step.

45. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 44, further comprising the steps of:

permitting any of said first chat session participant, said second chat session participant and said third chat session participant to modify any of said first contact list,

said second contact list and said third contact list according to results from said comparing step; and

permitting any of said chat session participants associated with said contact list to reject said modification.

46. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 42, wherein if said display icon indicates that said first contact list is not modifiable, further comprising the step of requesting said first chat session participant to allow said second chat session participant to modify said contact list.

47. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 42, wherein if said display icon indicates that said second contact list is not modifiable, further comprising the step of requesting said second chat session participant to allow said first chat session participant to modify said contact list.

48. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 36, further comprising the steps of:

requesting said first chat session participant to provide access to said first contact list; and

requesting said second chat session participant to provide access to said second contact list.

49. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 36, further comprising the step of providing accessibility status to selected chat session participants.

50. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 36, further comprising the step of providing accessibility status to all active chat session participants.

51. (Previously Presented) A machine readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying a first chat session participant selecting a first contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said first chat session participant and identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list selected by first chat session participant containing contact records relating to contacts of said second chat participant, said first chat session participant and said second chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

providing access for said first contact list to a second participant to the communication session;

comparing said first contact list and second contact list;

identifying similar contacts between contact records located in said first contact list and contact records located in said second contact list;

presenting similar contacts in a pre-selected visual format and dissimilar contacts in a different visual format; and

adding selected dissimilar contact records located in said first contact list to said second contact list.

52. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 51, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said first contact list is modifiable by said second participant to the communication session; and

if said first contact list is modifiable by said second participant, adding selected dissimilar contact records to said first contact list.

53. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 52, wherein said step of providing contact list to a first participant further comprises the steps of:

determining an accessibility status of said first contact list; and

providing access to said first contact list if said accessibility status indicates that said second participant can access said first contact list.

54. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 51, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said second contact list is accessible by said first participant to the communication session; and

if said second contact list is accessible by said first participant, identifying similar contacts between contact records located in said second contact list and contact records located in said first contact list.

55. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 54, further comprising the steps of:

determining if said second contact list is modifiable by said first participant to the communication session; and

adding selected dissimilar contact records located in said second contact list to said first contact list.

56. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 55, further comprising the step of displaying an icon to represent whether a contact list for a participant to the communication session is accessible.

57. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 56, further comprising the step of modifying said icon to display whether said contact list for said participant to the communication session is modifiable.

58. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying a plurality of chat session participants participating within a common chat session, each chat session participant maintaining a participant specific contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said that participant;

assembling and displaying a contact list in a GUI associated with one of the chat session participants, wherein said contact list includes contact records from chat session lists maintained chat session participants other than the one participant in which the GUI is displayed;

selecting a first contact list;

selecting a second contact list;

comparing said first contact list and said second contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list and the second contact list;

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list; and

accepting modifications to said contact list by chat session participants other than the one participant in which the GUI is displayed and responsively displaying results from said modifications within said GUI.

59. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying a first chat session participant maintaining a first contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said first chat session participant, identifying a second chat participant having a second contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said second chat participant, and identifying a third chat participant having a third contact list containing contact records relating to contacts of said third chat participant, said first chat session participant, said second chat session participant, and said third chat session participant participating within a common chat session;

sending a token of introduction originated by the first chat session participant to the second chat session participant, said token of introduction providing a recommendation for said second chat session participant;

transferring said token of introduction to the third chat session participant who is known to said first chat session participant; [[and]

if said third chat session participant accepts said token of introduction, modifying said third contact list with contact information for said second chat session participant;

comparing said first contact list, said second contact list, and said third contact list;

identifying common and non-common contacts between said first contact list, said second contact list, and said third contact list; and

displaying common contacts in a first visual list and non-common contacts in a second visual list.

60. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 59, further comprising modifying said second contact list with information for said third chat session participant.

61. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 60, further comprising discarding said token of introduction upon expiration of a specified period of time.

62. (Original) The machine readable storage according to claim 59, further comprising executing said transferring step upon said third chat session participant initiating a chat session with said second chat session participant.

63. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 59, further comprising the step of:

displaying icons within a chat session interface used by a third chat session participant to indicate whether said first chat contact list and said second contact list is accessible to said third chat session participant.

64. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 63, further comprising the steps of:

permitting the selection of said displayed icon for said first contact list and said displayed icon for said second contact list;

comparing said selected first contact list and said selected second contact list to said third contact list; and

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displaying to said third chat session participant contacts that are uncommon to said selected first contact list, said selected second contact list and said third contact list according to results from said comparing step.